

REMARKS

The Office Action dated May 23, 2005 has been received and carefully studied. Claims 41 and 42 have been amended and new dependent claims 109-124 have been added. The remainder of the claims have been canceled. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claim Amendments

Given the large number of pending claims and to focus the issues presently under consideration by the Examiner, the applicants have canceled all of the independent claims except for claim 41. Claim 41 has been amended to emphasize and clarify the steps of maintaining a customer database that includes information both on "present customer coupons that can presently be redeemed and future customer coupons not presently redeemable" and displaying on a terminal the status of a given customer's present customer coupons and future customer coupons. This is discussed, e.g., on p. 17 of the specification. Dependent claim 42 has been amended to be consistent with the changes to claim 41.

The remaining claims have been canceled. New claims 109-124 depend from claim 41 and recite various additional steps previously recited in the now canceled claims. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute the invention recited in the canceled claims in a subsequent continuation application.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has rejected claim 41 on the same grounds as claim 1, which itself has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over Sloane et al. in view of Barnett and Campbell. The Sloane patent discloses an interactive shopping system in which customers use a portable device to scan items while shopping. The Examiner has apparently cited Barnett for its teaching of an electronic coupon distribution and redemption system, including maintaining a record of customer points.

Neither Sloane nor Barnett teach maintaining in a customer database information about both present customer coupons and future customer coupons and displaying on a customer's terminal an indication of the status of the customer's account including the status of the present customer coupons and future customer coupons, as recited in claim 41 as amended. Accordingly, assuming for the sake of argument that the combination of Sloane and Barnett is proper, the combination would not result in the invention recited in claim 41.

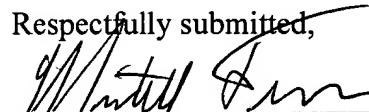
The Examiner has cited Campbell for its teaching of a system that prevents removal of a portable telephone from a charger if it is not fully charged. Notwithstanding that Campbell is not relevant to the invention recited in claim 41 (or claim 1 for that matter), Campbell also does not cure the deficiency of the Sloane and Barnett patents discussed above.

Accordingly, the rejection of claim 41 as being obvious over Sloane, Barnett and Campbell has been traversed and should be withdrawn. Claims 42 and 109-124 depend from claim 41 and are allowable over the cited art for at least the same reasons.

CONCLUSION

Each and every point raised by the Examiner has been addressed on the basis of the above amendments and remarks and the application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Action to that end is respectfully requested. However, should the Examiner believe that direct contact with the applicants' attorney would advance the progress of the application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number below.

Respectfully submitted,



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